The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 20, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918.

WHOLE NO. 1585 | WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 1941 | GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer | VOL. 31, NO. 34

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

How much longer is America going to celebrate Labor Day? Will the workers of America be able to enjoy their own holiday next year, five years from now and ten years hence? Will they still be free to do so?

These questions present themselves on this Labor Day with particular force because our country is threatened with the same fate that has overtaken so many nations of Europe and Asia by one.

That phrase—"one by one"—tolled like a mournful chant throughout the radio address of Prime Minister Churchill of Great Britain which we listened to with great interest the other day.

Mr. Churchill made it quite clear that America is safe—just now. England also is safe—for the time being. Hitler's blitzkrieg is otherwise occupied for the moment with the defenseless armies of Soviet Russia.

But if and when Russia is conquered or compelled to capitulate—which is far from unlikely—Great Britain's turn is next. And if Great Britain succumbs—which is also within the realm of possibility—our own shores will be Hitler's next objective.

When "No" Means "Yes"

The point Mr. Churchill was making—and it is so obviously true that it is not debatable—is that we are playing Hitler's game if we just sit back and wait for him to come to us. His strategy is to take on his intended victims "one by one," first lulling them into false security by insisting he has no aggressive designs on them. In fact, the only certain way of telling whether Hitler means "yes" is when he says "no."

That being so, the issue before the nation which should especially concern American workers on this Labor Day is whether we should play Hitler's game or our own.

The Lindbergs and the Wheelers and the John L. Lewises are trying to make America play Hitler's way. They are not only isolationists but obstructionists. In their ridiculous fury at President Roosevelt they are forgetting about the safety of America. Labor must not heed such dangerous stupidity.

Hitler's greatest advance agent is fear. He mesmerizes his intended victims by scaring them to death before he makes a move in their direction. Unfortunately, the Lindbergs, the Wheelers and the John Ls. Lewises are doing Hitler's job for him in this country. They are trying to scare the American people by warning them of war and the horrors of war. In playing on such fears and in emphasizing the universal dread of war, they are serving to make America unfit for war if war is forced upon us.

F. D. R. Not That Kind of Guy

As we have noted before, the workers of America have full confidence in President Roosevelt. No one can turn them against him by calling him a war-monger. They know his humanity, his decency and his love of America. And they love him for that. The obstructionists are getting to have a hard time convincing the American workers that President Roosevelt wants to propel America into an unnecessary war just because he would like to go down in history as a great war President. They know F. D. R. is just not that kind of a guy.

So the war scares—that is the fake scares manufactured by the America Firsters—are not frightening American workers. What they are disturbed about is the real danger. This danger is not a war which anyone in this country is going to bring on. That Hitler intends to force upon us whenever he gets set for it and can take us on in his "one by one" style.

Now the interventionists—and there are plenty of them—would like us to jump right in and spoil Hitler's strategy by taking him on now when he is not ready for us. But we don't want that kind of war either. We and Britain are not ready for him. Who would have the nerve to send an American Expeditionary force to Europe when our Army is still using dummy guns and tanks in its war games maneuvers because real shooting guns and tanks are not yet available even for practice?

No, the thing for us to do right now is to get busy with everything we've got to make our armed forces powerful enough to frighten Hitler. When that time comes, it will be the time to spike Hitler's plans. American workers know that and on this Labor Day they can feel proud of their efforts to help America speed the day.

Ed J. Gainor, Beloved Labor Leader, Retires As Letter Carriers' Head

Washington, D. C.—One of the nation's best-known and most scholarly labor leaders—President Edward J. Gainor of the National Association of Letter Carriers—announced that he is relinquishing his office after 28 years at the helm.

"I'm passing the reins to younger hands," Gainor declared with the seventy-first birthday on August 1. His retirement, he explained, will take effect at union's national convention in Los Angeles Sept. 1. Secretary M. T. Finnan will retire at the same time, after serving 41 years as an officer, 17 of that in his present position.

A picturesque character in the labor movement, Gainor is known for his hearty manner, a keen sense of humor and a remarkable memory for epigrams and verse from classic writers and poets.

Puddler in a steel mill in his youth, Gainor became a letter carrier in the '90s and joined the union in 1897. He rose to membership on the national executive board in 1901, then to vice president and finally to president in 1913. Since 1934 he has also been a member of the A. F. of L. executive Council.

"Unionism has brought a lot of changes in the carrier service in my time," Gainor recalled. "When I started, carriers were paid from $600 to $1,000 a year, and worked about 14 hours a day. Now they get $2,100, and have the eight-hour and 40-hour week. Their retirement pension is $1,000 a month."

Membership of the union is now at an all-time high of 70,000—9,000 more than the number of regular carriers on Uncle Sam's payroll. The excess includes retired and substitute carriers, Gainor explained.

In his final report as president, to be submitted to the September convention, Mr. Gainor paid high tribute to the American Federation of Labor, he said.

"The American Federation of Labor, now established more than 50 years, has achieved great heights in its noble battle for the cause of labor and for social and economic progress. It has served the workers of America well. Its accomplishments defy estimate. Fashioning its policy between extremes, it has met each new problem with courage and common sense and thus has grown steadily in prestige and usefulness during the building on a foundation of sound principles and progressively adapting its processes to best answer labor's needs, it has also won the confidence of the working men and women associated with it.

"The National Association of Letter Carriers became affiliated with the American Federation of Labor in 1913 and the wisdom of the decision and timeliness of this affiliation have been repeatedly demonstrated. By various developments during the years since intervening. Each succeeding national convention of our association held since 1917 has renewed its original pledge of cooperation and reaffirmed its faith in the American Federation of Labor."

Mr. Gainor's report concludes with a characteristic farewell. He says:

"This convention will conclude my tenure of office as president of the National Association of Letter Carriers. In sentimental retrospection, I look back to my first national convention in Chattanooga, Tenn., just 40 years ago, and with vivid recollections of many thoughts and deeds through the intervening years up to this good hour. I think of the wonders wrought by our organization's loyalty and its difficulty, and welding into a common brotherhood our great army of fellow craftsmen. I think of the wealth of friends our movement has brought and of the treasured companionship, and far, sharing their companionship, I think of the impressive accomplishments which I know have greatly served public and postal welfare. And I appreciate impressively raising the employment status of our splendid letter carriers to an ever higher level of dignity and security. "Life is made up of meetings and of partings," said the immortal Dickens, and again "parting is such sweet sorrow." To serve you has been a privilege and a happiness. In that spirit, I return to you my trust and salute you gratefully. To my successor I bring my best wishes. I shall remain in the National Association of Letter Carriers. May its glory never dim."

DEFENSE SAVINGS FILM RELEASED BY TREASURY

Washington, D. C.—"America Prepared," a ten minute motion picture feature, has been released to nontheatrical outlets by the Treasury Department. This film, which may be shown on a 16-mm sound projector, is loaned without charge to groups interested in furthering the National Defense Program.

The feature opens with a short talk by a private of the Army Air Corps, explaining how the sale of Savings Bonds and Stamps aids the Government. Additional sequences show ways in which the purchase of Bonds and Stamps helps the Defense Program. Music and comment provide background for scenes showing shipyards, aircraft factories and other defense industries. Phases of rural defense activities and civilian service are discussed, and the film ends with a short appeal to buy Defense Savings Bonds and Stamps.

This film is available to labor unions, educational groups, women's clubs and other organizations. Information about America Prepared may be obtained by writing to Defense Savings Staff, Treasury Department, Washington, D. C.

Labor And Industry Join In Plan To Train Electrical Apprentices

Washington, D. C.—A fine example of union-management cooperation to elevate an industry and aid national defense was demonstrated in Washington last night when labor and employers in the electrical industry came to the nation's capital from all parts of the country, sat down together at a dinner in the Mayflower Hotel, and formally launched far-reaching national standards for the training of apprentices.

Heretofore, locals of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and employers have established many cities in promotion of apprentice training, but this was the first time an apprenticeship program was worked out for the electrical industry on a national scale.

The standards were drafted by a joint committee of the Brotherhood and the National Electrical Contractors' Association. Their promulgation at this time was looked upon as especially significant because of the great importance of training more skilled workers for defense production.

Spokesmen for both the union and the contractors hailed the event as a milestone for the industry and pledged they would do all in their power to make the training program a success.

Assistant Secretary of Labor Dan W. Tracy, who is also chairman of the Brotherhood's Executive Council, voiced jubilation over the achievement in an address to the gathering.

"Apprentice training has been closest to my heart for a long time," he said. "We had difficulty for many years interesting employers in the problem, because there was always a big supply of skilled labor.

"Now the story is different. The demands of national defense have created a great interest in apprentice training. Employers, more than ever, have become convinced of the need of such training. This is a time for employers and labor to get together. The results will benefit, not only the industry, but the entire country."

Robert W. McChesney, president of the Contractors' Association, also expressed enthusiasm over the program.

"It has been a hard task to draft the standards," he said. "We had to find a way of assuring the young people enough work to earn a living and at the same time get adequate training. We have succeeded, and in so far as employers are concerned, I pledge we will fulfill our responsibility in carrying out the standards."

President Ed J. Brown of the Electrical Workers praised the program as one that "will be a lasting means give our young people an opportunity to develop skill and contribute to the nation's advancement."

"It will be our job to make them thorough mechanics, so that they will be good in boom times or depression alike," he said.

Millions To Hear Labor Day Talks; Green, Meany, Ornburn On Air

Washington, D. C.—More than a million American workers are expected to hear President William Green's Labor Day Address which will be broadcast from Coast to Coast over the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company and CBS from 2:30 P. M. Eastern Standard Time on Sept. 1. Mr. Green will speak from Grand Rapids, Mich., at a monster Labor Day celebration. Mr. Green also will be heard over the air earlier in the day on a program sponsored by the Office of Production Management during which President Roosevelt will be the principal speaker.

George Meany, Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of Labor, will deliver his Labor Day address before a mass meeting at Uniondale, L. I. It will also be heard from Coast to Coast over the facilities of the Columbia Broadcasting Company from 2:30 to 2:45 P. M., Eastern Standard Time, on that day.

A special union label broadcast will be made by I. M. Ornburn, Secretary-Treasurer of the Union Label Trades Department, over the Mutual Broadcasting System from 10 to 10:15 A. M. Eastern Standard Time.

Be sure to listen in on these inspiring and important Labor Day talks.

Teachers' Convention Expels Three Communist-Led Locals

Detroit, Mich.— The twenty-fifth annual convention of the American Federation of Teachers completed by an overwhelming voice vote the expulsion of three locals and on Local 5 and 537 of New York and 192 of Philadelphia, accused of being dominated by Communists.

A proposal from the floor to set up a commission further to explore the matter was likewise voted down after Miss Mary McGough, chairman of the credentials committee, argued that the convention had no right to take action contrary to the referendum which expelled the locals last June.

John D. Conners of New Bedford, Mass., vice president of the federation, declared that the membership is the highest authority and the convention only secondary and that any bona fide teacher in New York or Philadelphia is eligible to membership; all he has to do is to fill out a membership application card.

The convention received a message from Dr. John Dewey, teacher and philosopher, now 82, who said:

"If I were present in person I should want to pay my especial regards to old friends with whom I was associated in the past and who never yielded the least ground in their battles for teachers, for the labor movement in association with teachers and for the freedom of education from subjection to foreign political influences."

FBI Gives CIO The Jitters

Cleveland, O.—Delegates at the Cleveland CIO council meeting were thrown into a dither when Peter Zvara, organizer for the Coke, Gas and Chemical Workers, announced breathlessly that "there are 21 FBI men concentrated here in the Gypsum plant at Port Clinton."

The CIO has been having itself a strike at nearby Gypsum, Ohio, at the U. S. Gypsum company—in spite of the fact it has only a handful of members there and in spite of the fact that nearly 500 workers want nothing to do with Lewis' boys.

So when Peter ups and says, "the FBI's come to town," the CIO gang gets jittery. "Our union is investigated by J. Edgar Hoover in Washington," Zvara declared. "We want to know why 21 FBI men are suddenly concentrated in a town of 4000 people." And so on and so on.

Well, there were 21 FBI agents in Port Clinton last week. But they just happened to be there. It was a strike at Gypsum. They probably didn't know the CIO was anywhere around. They were up for their monthly target practice session at Camp Perry, six miles away.

A. F. of L. Cannery Union Signs Up Big California Food Packing Plant

Stockton, Cal.—A notable contract was signed by the Stockton Cannery Workers Local 20676, A.F.L. with the Flotill Products, Inc., packers and distributors of food products and one of the largest plants of its kind in California.

The full union contract incorporates the check-off system of dues collection, a new feature of the contracts approved by the California Council of Cannery and Process Workers. It also marks a forward step for the agricultural unions of this state and establishes a program of mutual cooperation beneficial to employer and employe alike.

It is noteworthy that the first cannery operator to accept this humane contractual agreement in behalf of employes is a woman. She is Mrs. P. Weisberg, president of the Flotill Products, Inc. After affixing her signature to the contract, the first entry its kind to be signed in the canning and processing industry in the United States, Miss Weisberg stated:

"I am happy to be the first industrialist in the agricultural field to place my signature to such a progressive and humane contract which will be an instrument of progress for both employer and employe."

Meyer L. Lewis, general manager of the Flotill Products, Inc., and former western director of the American Federation of Labor, also signed the contract which he assisted in negotiating.

News Briefs

DRESS MANUFACTURERS AGREE TO WAGE BOOST

New York, N. Y.—Three associations of dress manufacturers here representing more than approximately 10 per cent to all the city's dressmakers to compensate for the rising cost of living. It was believed that the rise would also be approved by two associations representing dress contractors. The increases, affecting 85,000 dress workers, would increase the $110,000,000 in the industry pay roll, were requested by the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, AFL affiliate.

WAGE UNIT DEBATES BAN ON KNIT WEAR HOMEWORK

Washington, D. C.—The probability that "homework" may have to be abolished in order to establish an equitable minimum wage was revealed in wage increases of approximately 10 per cent to all the city's knitted outwear industry Committee on the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor, which considered establishment of a 40-cent minimum for the workers, the present level being 35 cents.

Spokesmen for the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union pointed out that wage differentials based on regional considerations or sex and age of workers are prohibited by the Fair Labor Standards Act, and that no basis now existed for differentials based on cost of living.

CHORUS GIRLS' SALARIES INCREASED FIVE DOLLARS

New York, N. Y.—The council of Actors Equity Association adopted a resolution increasing the salaries of chorus girls five dollars, effective November 1. Under the new rate the minimum wage of Chorus Equity members appearing on Broadway will be forty dollars instead of thirty-five, and forty-five rather than forty when employed on the road.

WAGE ORDER BENEFITS 89,000 WOMEN WORKERS

Washington, D. C.—Approval of the men's shirts, single pants and allied garments wage order requiring payment of not least 40 cents an hour to all employes except learners was announced by General Philip B. Fleming, Wage and Hour Administrator.

It was estimated that the new minimum will increase the wage rate of 89,000, mostly women sewing-machine operators, by 16% above the level now in the industry. It represents an increase in their guaranteed wage for the standard 40-hour week from $13.20 under the original 33½ cents an hour rate to $16.00, an increase in payroll of about $270,000 a week.

Labor Sunday Message, 1941

Approved by the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and issued through its Department of the Church and Social Service.

The Christian concern for democracy, based on Jesus' teaching of the dignity and essential brotherhood of all the children of God, long an influence in political institutions, has more recently become a living expression in economic and industrial relations. This concern supports the right of the common man to a voice in determining the conditions under which he lives and works. The labor movement, like political democracy, has its imperfections; yet it is the major organized effort to establish in principle in industry. Employers in increasing numbers are freely granting to labor the right to organize and are working out constructive relations with unions on the basis of a mutual confidence. In many industries, the men and women who work with their hands and their brains are no longer a struggling minority seeking recognition, but a vital part of the profits of industry. They have become a great organic movement, involved directly in the world-wide struggle for the preservation and growth of democracy.

In economic life, where liberty and equality prevail as ideals of human relations, there the labor movement is strong. Where they are not applied to industrial relations, there unions are few and weak. Where democracy has been discarded, as in the totalitarian states, there the independent labor union movement has disappeared. The existence of these contrasting situations is not a mere coincidence. Rooted deep in the very law of its nature, must extend into industrial and economic as well as political relations. Totalitarianism, by an equally inherent law of its being, must destroy the independent labor union movement. Industrial civilization must either extend more democratic control over its own purpose and to those who consume economic goods and services, or it must sooner or later come to a political crisis. There seems to be no other alternative. If we cannot have the spirit of Christian democracy in industry, all democracy is jeopardized.

It is well that church members face this fact and come to terms with it. A new missionary opportunity presents itself. The churches should urge the further application of the Christian principles of democracy to industrial and economic relations. If this new missionary call is heeded, the Christian forces will play a vital part in the era just ahead. If it is ignored, they are likely to have little part in solving our most urgent social problems and infusing spiritual life into society.

The fundamental religious concern with industry has to do with its spirit and purpose. If we are to develop an economic order which will express the spirit of Christ, who came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister," the primary test of production and distribution must be not private advantage but the common good. A Christian spirit must find appropriate economic forms to fulfill the principle that the greatest service to human need.

In the area of industrial relations the church must make clear that only that labor has the right to organize, which has that the principle of union organization is socially sound. At the same time as labor grows in power, it must assume the social responsibility which power entails. Organized labor can command public support only as it deals effectively with various elements in its ranks which weaken confidence in its integrity. It must live up to the Christian spirit which is essential to democracy. It must itself practice democracy in control and, where necessary, put its own house in order. It must also refrain from discriminating against any workers because of color or creed. Many unions have led the way in fair interracial relations in their own membership and have set a worthy example to civic and religious organizations. Others have yet to accept and to practice this Christian democratic principle.

The hour of crisis calls for a Christian movement which has renewed its spirit and clarified its vision of the wider implications of its gospel, and for a labor movement which has purified its practices and set its eyes on the farther goals of true democracy. All groups are summoned to work together for a better ordering of society upheld by religion on the one hand, and by the productive labor of hand and brain on the other.

Free Labor Must Be Peace Guarantee, Green Tells New York Federation

MRS. HERRICK DEFENDS LABOR'S RIGHT TO STRIKE

New York, N. Y.—Ellnore M. Herrick, regional director of the National Labor Relations Board, defended the right of labor to strike in vital defense industries. She emphasized freedom of decision on the part of the worker, declaring that although "some people are thinking we ought to put a stop to this sort of business," strikes cannot be clamped down upon without the surrender of something "precious" to every American.

Speaking before fifty members of the New York Club Presidents Roundtable, meeting at the Hotel Pierre, Mrs. Herrick praised Congress for refusing to pass legislation that would make criminals of strikers.

She cautioned against an emotional attitude toward the present strike situation, one of the many complexities, she said, that have arisen because of the national emergency.

PATTERSON LAUDS HELP OF LABOR

Under-Secretary of War Sends Labor Day Greetings to Green

Washington, D. C.—Undersecretary of War Robert P. Patterson, in a telegram to President William Green, extended the Labor Day greetings to the members of the American Federation of Labor and expressed his appreciation of the "patriotic manner" in which they have rallied to the support of the national defense program. His telegram follows:

"On this Labor Day of 1941, the War Department is anxious to have you extend to the millions of American Federation of Labor members throughout the nation its profound gratification over the patriotic manner in which they are rising to the needs of the present emergency.

"Labor has roost at stake in the present world democracy. America can only hope to survive the real and imminent dangers confronting it today if every available man and woman is mobilized behind the effort. We are determined to maintain unimpaired here in America the four freedoms.

Secretary-Treasurer Meany, a former president of the New York Federation, told the convention that "even in the midst of this defense program we must not neglect our needs to the day when defense production ceases."

"American industry is now running in high gear," he said. "Thousands of factories are operating twenty-four hours a day. Workers can go from city to city and find jobs. But let us remember that there will be a day when this defense program will cease.

"There will be a day when this war, like all other wars that have gone before, will come to an end. We have to look forward to that day because when that day comes we will be face to face—unless something is done about it—with a major depression.

He urged the government to follow the lead of the National Resources Committee of the American Federation of Labor for an agency, upon which labor is represented, to see that government would be represented, "to plan for an employment program that will use the resources of America so that we can go on producing, not the things of war but the things that make life worth while."

The delegates unanimously approved the eight-point war-aim program proclaimed by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill at their recent meeting in the Atlantic.

The convention also adopted a resolution approving all-out aid to Soviet Russia as well as the other victims of aggression, but declaring at the same time that aid to Russia was regarded as a matter of military expediency and did not indicate that American labor, as represented by the A. F. of L, was diminishing its hostility to communism.

The convention approved a resolution calling for the immediate creation of federal and state agencies, with the participation of labor, to formulate plans for the nation's transition from the defense footing to a peace status.

President Thomas J. Lyons, Secretary E. W. Edwards and all other officers of the State Federation were re-elected and Harold C. Hanover was elected to fill a vacant vice-presidency.

Demands Full Representation at Peace Conferences After War is Over

Syracuse, N. Y.—President William Green of the American Federation of Labor drew prolonged cheers at the seventy-eighth annual convention of the New York State Federation of Labor with a declaration that at the peace conference which will follow the end of the war the workers of the various nations of the world must be given direct representation.

"When this present tyrant running loose in Europe by the name of Hitler is finally defeated and the representatives of the governments sit around the conference table," Mr. Green said, "they want labor represented, sitting at that conference table, too.

"I demand that the representatives of labor from every nation, speaking different languages, worshipping in accordance with the dictates of their conscience, be there to help shape a new world, new freedoms, new rights-consensus and a new future for the people throughout the world.

"We want written into the agreement, in simple language, this: That workers in every nation throughout the world shall be accorded the full and unrestricted right to establish and maintain free, democratic unions. That right must never be given up."

Mr. Green advanced his proposal as an amendment to the eight-point war-aim program proclaimed by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill at their recent historic meeting in the Atlantic after telling the convention that "the American Federation of Labor stands behind the President and in support of the eight points announced by him a few days ago."

Other outstanding speakers at the convention, attended by delegates representing almost 1,400,000 A. F. of L. workers, were Secretary-Treasurer George Meany, Vice-President Matthew Woll, Undersecretary of War Robert P. Patterson and Mayor F. H. LaGuardia of New York City.

In his address, which was the highlight of the convention, President Green expressed his great satisfaction that "my men and women of American labor in all parts of the nation understand the issues involved in this war.

"Even though we live in America and the battle is going on on Russian soil and in other sections of Europe far removed," he said, "we know that there are questions at stake that affect our homes and our freedom.

"For that reason the American Federation of Labor led the way, sounded the note and gave assurances of support to our great President that we would stand with him until the end. That is our position. We are determined to maintain unimpaired here in America the four freedoms.

OFFICIALS OF MARYLAND NEGOTIATE WITH FERRYMEN

Annapolis, Md.—A short strike of 125 crewmen of three State-owned ferries operating across the Chesapeake Bay between here and Matapeake was ended when Maryland State officials agreed to negotiate with the International Longshoremen's Association, AFL affiliate, on demands for higher wages and shorter hours.